



THE BIBLE  
AND  
EVOLUTION.

BY  
W. H. SPARSHOTT.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THERE are in the Bible manifold food for many minds and precept and example for every age. This it is that makes the Scriptures lively oracles, always speaking to the times that need them ; while no one can really study them without having brought home to his sense, as well as his faith, that, under the many authors and styles, there is one Author, one design, throughout. All the history, all the ritual, all the prophecy, all the morality, culminate in One Person, from " In the beginning" to the last " Amen." Can such unity be found in any other national literature ; above all extending over such an immense period ?

Here is the great prayer-book which puts supplications applicable to each and all into our mouths ; here is the pattern for all prayers, and here is the history of the coming of the Comforter who strengthens us to be holy. Here we are shown redemption for our sins, and the means of grace for applying its benefits to our souls. Here is our hymn-book of praise, and here is the glimpse we have of our eternal home.—CHARLOTTE M. YONGE, *Otterbourne, Winchester, England.*



## THE BIBLE.

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“THE Bible is none other than the voice of Him that sitteth upon the Throne. Every book of it—every chapter of it—every verse of it—every word of it—every syllable of it—every *letter* of it is the direct utterance of the Most High ! The Bible is none other than the word of God ; not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike, the utterance of Him that sitteth upon the Throne—absolute, faultless, unerring, supreme !”

These are, I believe, the words of an Oxford professor. I read them some ten or twelve years ago in Dr. Colenso's work on the Pentateuch, and now quote them from memory. The statements are somewhat extravagant, it must be admitted, even if the writer referred only to the original Scriptures ; but it is certain that the Jews regarded the Scriptures in this light, and did not consider themselves at liberty to alter one single letter ; though we have to thank them for adding, in later times, a barbarous system of vocalization, which has been the plague of every student of Hebrew since.

A more modern opinion about the Bible may very aptly be expressed in the very words which Lord Macaulay applies to the history of Herodotus. Macaulay says that Herodotus “has written something better, perhaps, than the best history ; but he has not written a good history : he is from the first to the last an inventor. We do not here refer to those gross fictions with which he has been reproached by the critics of later times. We speak of that coloring which has been equally



diffused over his whole narrative, and which perpetually leaves the most sagacious reader in doubt what to reject and what to receive." And again : " The great events are no doubt faithfully narrated ; so probably are many of the slighter circumstances ; but which of them it is impossible to ascertain. The fictions are so much like the facts and the facts so much like the fictions, that, with respect to many most interesting particulars, our belief is neither given nor withheld, but remains in an uneasy and interminable state of abeyance. We know that there is truth, but we cannot exactly decide where it lies."

Now the enquiry arises, whether either of these representations is true, or if the truth respecting the position, authority, and claims of the Bible upon us is to be found in some compromise between the two. This is the enquiry which I propose briefly to follow, and I will state why. My theological studies commenced when I was about fifteen. I was at the time a member of a Young Men's Christian Association in which religious opinions, somewhat various and sometimes conflicting, were freely ventilated and discussed. One result to me was that I soon became an ardent controversialist ; and I have a very good recollection of a three hours' discussion on the subject of baptism which I had one evening with a clergyman who is now Bishop of the Transvaal. It is, indeed, with something like amazement that I occasionally recall the self-confidence with which I maintained hastily adopted and half-formed opinions, some of which it is hardly necessary to say I, in the course of time, was led to modify or abandon. But since those early days I have had a considerable acquaintance with the religious world and with religious beliefs and controversies ; and I have seen some of the bitter fruits of religious dissension, the influence of which upon

my mind has been to give me almost as great an antipathy to controversy as at the time I have referred to I had tendency to it. The fact is, having become settled in my own religious belief, and satisfied with it, I have been of late years inclined to hold to my own opinions and leave others to enjoy theirs. But, whatever my *inclination*, my *judgment* assures me that this would not be a proper course to pursue; and that, though I do not occupy any official position in connection with the religious world, this fact does not release me from the obligation of seeking to impart to others what I have been able to gather up by the use of opportunities such as have fallen to the lot of but few, even amongst recognized religious teachers. Moreover, during the three years that I have been in Canada I have become painfully conscious of the prevalence of infidel opinions, especially amongst young men, and I have thought that those who are seeking the truth may be assisted by the considerations which I am about to present.

It appears to me that the evidence of the divine authority of the Scriptures is two-fold. There is the nature of the communications themselves, and there are the signs which accompany their delivery or reception. It was thus with God's demand upon Pharaoh to let Israel go, that they might serve him. No argument was used to prove Jehovah's right to issue such a demand, nor were there any explanations entered into. It would appear that Israel's God considered the character of the message to be such that Pharaoh ought to have submitted to it without gainsaying; but, in response to the representations of Moses, God gave him signs, by which he could, when in the presence of Pharaoh, demonstrate that Jehovah had indeed sent him, and thus leave the Egyptian monarch without any excuse in the event of non-compliance.



This was God's usual plan in those early times, when there was no written revelation, notably at Mount Sinai. When Christ came, he did not depart from this ancient method. Some were convinced by his miracles, whilst others were persuaded by the character of his testimony alone, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded from his mouth. The Samaritan woman with whom he conversed at Jacob's well had no difficulty in discovering that he was a prophet, after a few minutes' conversation with him. The narrative of this interview is most instructive, and throws a flood of light upon the causes of infidelity. The acknowledgment of Christ's messiahship on the part of this woman involved the further acknowledgment that she herself was a sinner—that she had had five husbands, and was then living in adultery. It is fair to assume that only a small proportion of Christ's hearers were guilty of this particular sin; but it may be safely asserted that there was not one of them who could acknowledge Christ's claims without placing himself on the same platform as this woman. If they were willing to do so, there was an end of contention, because Christ was willing to lift them up out of the mire: he had come for the very purpose. But it is not wonderful, considering the sacrifice of personal pride that had to be made, that many rebelled. It is the same to-day. The Bible not only reveals God, but it shows what man is. It tells us just where we are, and what we are—an unpleasant revelation; and it is not surprising that many should refuse to accept the strongest evidence, and then ask for a sign, as the earlier sceptics did.

Now that the written revelation is complete, the evidence from the peculiar nature of the communications is stronger than ever, because there is a unity of testimony extending over long periods. We have now one harmonious whole, one

part corroborating and explaining another, and all bearing unmistakable testimony to the fact that "under the many authors and styles, there is one Author, one design, throughout." Only consider how the facts of Christ's life, as detailed in the New Testament, fulfil the types and shadows of the Old. But we have external evidence also. Take, for example, the fulfilment of prophecy as one class of signs, and the fruits of Christianity as another. We know what became of Egypt, Babylon, and Tyre, which occupied such exalted positions in the world at the time their overthrow was foretold by the prophets. We know what happened to "Zion the city of our solemnities," and to God's ancient people.

As to the teaching of the Bible, it is remarkable how the Bible exposes and condemns every corrupt affection, passion and tendency of the human mind and heart, inculcating at the same time the opposite virtues; so that, if its precepts were universally carried out, we should—notwithstanding the fact that the world is but the wreck of a nobler edifice—be almost back in Eden again. A few years ago, after spending an evening at a village inn in the South of England (and I may say that some of the pleasantest evenings of my life have been so spent), I got into a religious discussion with an intelligent farm-laborer, who used to study botany, geology, algebra, and Euclid, was familiar with the English poets, had read the writings of Macaulay, John Stuart Mill, &c. In the course of the discussion he said, "Jesus Christ said 'Love your enemies': I think that is ridiculous." I replied, "It runs counter to your natural tendencies; does it not?" "Yes," he said. "And contrary to the natural tendencies of every other man?" "Yes." "Then," I said, "it must have had some other than a human origin." To this he had no answer. The sublime code of morals contained in the Bible

has drawn forth, and still draws forth, the commendation of professed infidels, and they have often joined with those who said of Jesus Christ, "he is a good man." But it is not possible logically to go so far and no further; for if he is not the Judge of quick and dead, before whose tribunal all must appear—if he is not the Son of God, and one with God—it is not possible to regard him as a good man at all; but he was the greatest of impostors. It is not possible logically, I say, to take any middle platform

Then the truth of Christianity is proved by its moral fruits. There is, it is true, a great deal of corruption also connected with it; but no one doubts but this would have existed had Christianity never been introduced, so that it cannot be made responsible for it. It simply represents the extent to which Christianity has been embraced only in name, whilst the good that exists side by side with it—which no one can question is the natural outcome of its teaching—represents the extent to which the truths of Christianity are in practical operation. It has been denied that Christianity is the greatest factor in civilization. If it is not, how comes it to pass that China and India are so far behind European countries, when they were on the road to civilization so much earlier? Ancient Greece has been held up as an example of civilization without Christianity. It was not so civilized as some fancy; and there were no elements of unity or continuity. The passions of men were unsubdued, and Greece, like a volcano, was rent asunder by civil wars, which were carried on for many years with a deadliness, a treachery, and a cruelty, anything beyond which I suppose we have no record of in connection with either civilized or savage tribes; so that Greece destroyed herself. No more fitting example could be given of the impossibility of men making a satisfactory use of natural advantages unaided by revealed religion.

But the greatest proof to the individual of the divine authority of the Scriptures is practical experience of their power and truth ; and thus it is that, ordinarily, a true christian is never troubled with the question at all. He knows the Bible to be the word of God, just as a man knows the facts of his own life and relations. He does not concern himself about evidences unless the question is brought before him by objectors ; and when the question is thus brought before him, and he is asked for evidence of the divine authority of the Scriptures, the probability is that he hardly knows what to say in reply, just as he would hardly know what to say if some one should ask him, " How do you know that you are a living being?"

Having said this much as to the divine inspiration of Scripture in general, I will proceed to enquire, *to what extent* Scripture is inspired. To put the issue in a few words—Is the Bible the word of God, or does it simply *contain* the word of God? There are in the present day a small party in the Church of England, a much larger party among the Congregationalists in England, and a sprinkling of men amongst other religious bodies, who maintain the latter view. I am speaking of the condition of things in England ; my acquaintance with the religious bodies on this continent not being sufficient to enable me to speak with much certainty of them. This new school comprises some well known and some certainly very able men. They differ a good deal amongst themselves as to the importance to be attached to Scripture as compared with other writings ; but they would all leave us in uncertainty as to what portions of Scripture are to be accepted as divine truth and what to be refused. They say in effect—" We know that there is truth, but we cannot exactly decide where it lies."

Now, does it not at the outset seem very strange that if God should undertake to communicate his mind to man, he should do it in this mixed way, so that nobody could with any certainty discover it? If one will take the trouble to read the 119th Psalm he will see that this was not the light in which David regarded the Scriptures which were in use in his day. It is, moreover, certain that this is not the light in which Christ and the apostles regarded the Old Testament. They quoted it as the Word of God—as an authority from which there was no appeal. When Christ declared that not one jot nor tittle should pass from the law till all was fulfilled, are we to suppose he was saying anything so meaningless as that what was true would come to pass? He was speaking of certain writings, known to those he addressed as “the law,” or “the law and the prophets,” and he was maintaining their validity in every particular. The apostles also quoted the Old Testament as that which was to silence all controversy; and they claimed the same authority for their own testimony. There is just one exception which proves the rule. I refer to the advice which St. Paul gives on the subject of marriage in 1 Cor. vii, where he says that for some of his recommendations he had no divine command, and, therefore, they were to accept them as *his* counsel, not the Lord’s, though he spoke as one who had the spirit of Christ, v. 40. Can anything more clearly show how utterly at variance the views of the apostles respecting divine inspiration were from the notions of the new school to which I have referred, who represent that the writers of Scripture were inspired only in the same way as religious teachers generally are?

Is it for one moment conceivable, if the Old Testament contained a good deal of fiction, and a good deal which is merely the product of oriental ignorance and prejudice, as is

alleged, that he who when in the world was "the light of the world" should have left the scene without indicating to his followers what these untrustworthy portions were? It is a source of the deepest consolation that Christ and the apostles left behind them their oft-repeated and unmistakable testimony to the inviolable sacredness and unqualified trustworthiness of the whole of the Old Testament. But these modern lights are so much better acquainted with the subject; and though Jesus Christ made the world, he was not so well acquainted with the details of the operations as they are! Let it be borne in mind that the gentlemen to whom I refer are not atheists nor avowed infidels, but those who believe the Bible contains a revelation from heaven; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he came into the world to reveal God and to teach the way of life to man. If there were half the contradiction in the Bible that there is in their opinions, one might indeed despair of discovering what is truth from it.

I will now just notice some popular objections. I do not for a moment deny that there are some difficulties in connection with the Bible. He who comes to the study of theology with the idea that he will find it so much easier than chemistry, astronomy, physiology, or any other science, will assuredly be disappointed. Notwithstanding that we have the promise of divine assistance, if we seek it, the things of God can be learnt only by the same uphill process as is the conditions of success in all other studies; and if after years of research, and the removal of many difficulties, some difficulties should remain, this should not prove a stumbling-block, for the same thing occurs in the study of the material world. In this department also there are things which no one can explain or account for by any known law.



Many difficulties and obscurities in Scripture arise from inaccurate transcription or translation ; and Mr. Robert Young, of Edinburgh, who has translated the whole of the Bible literally, and from a revised text, goes so far as to say that nine-tenths of the objections of sceptics and unbelievers are completely removed by this new version. We must, however, make some allowance for the fact that this gentleman is commending his own work. But many of the difficulties are created by those who complain of them. Some, for example, arise from the rejection of the supernatural. Now, if you start in the study of Scripture with the assumption that nothing has happened or can happen that is at variance with natural laws, you will meet with difficulties at every step ; but the fault is not with Scripture, but with your assumption. Upon this point I will say more under the head of Evolution. Again, some object to the representations which the Bible gives of God, because they are not in accordance with their notions of what God is or ought to be. If people come to the Bible with the idea that God is nothing but love and tenderness, they will meet with difficulties which can be explained only by the fact that "Our God is a consuming fire," a truth which is as consistently and persistently enforced in Scripture as its great parallel that "God is love." The Bible reveals God : it is from it alone that we can get an accurate conception of Him ; but to first arrive at a conclusion as to what God is, and then to complain because the representations of Scripture contradict this hypothesis, is to turn things upside down.

Unbelievers like to make capital out of the divisions amongst those who profess the Christian faith, and they ask, how can the Bible be an intelligible guide when those who profess to submit to its authority differ so widely? Now,

these differences prove nothing against the consistency or intelligibility of the Scripture testimony any more than the fact that two lawyers dispute the interpretation or application of a particular law proves that the statute has not been properly framed. The Christian church is not composed of angels, but of those who are being *prepared* for a perfect sphere. These differ much as to intelligence, knowledge, and devotion. God does not force divine light upon any ; but, in the words of another, "the fulness of God waits upon an empty vessel." He dispenses divine light and grace to those who seek the same, and in proportion as they seek them. "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding : if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasures ; *then* shall thou understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." Let it be borne in mind how repugnant divine truth is to the natural heart, and it will not appear wonderful that those who profess to follow it, or even those who truly receive it, should not give it an equally cordial reception. In the case of Christ's disciples, after they had grasped the fundamental fact that Jesus was the Son of God, how much ignorance, not to say perversity, remained ! But the divisions in the Church are not so serious as many represent. In many cases they turn upon such questions as Church government, respecting which no very definite rules are laid down in Scripture ; and those who thus differ can and do fully acknowledge one another as Christ's disciples and servants, and frequently co-operate as such.

I think I need say very little about principles of interpretations, as this is a subject which rarely troubles those who read the Bible with the desire to know the mind of God ; though it is a subject of great interest to the theologians who

have "an axe to grind," or theories of their own to establish ; just as the preparation of milk for the breakfast table is a subject of great interest to the dairyman, who, having lost faith in nature, believes that milk direct from the cow is inimical to the public health. But if I should lay down any rules, I should simply quote the words of Prof. Riddle, of Hartford, Connecticut : " The Bible is to be interpreted in accordance with the plain historical sense of its words, as determined by the ordinary laws of language. " Read the Bible copiously with the single aim to know the meaning of the writer. Pray God to give grace to accept and apply that meaning when found. This is practically the illumination of the Spirit. Begin with the plainer passages, reserving the more obscure ones until greater skill is acquired."

As to the canon of Scripture, we can have no difficulty in regard to the Old Testament. The phrase, " the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms," describes the whole of the Old Testament as divided in the Hebrew Bible, the last division including some other books with the Psalms ; and it was the whole of the Old Testament, and thus divided, that Christ and the apostles attached divine authority to. Two or three of the books of the New Testament have been subjects of dispute. I am quite satisfied with the canon myself ; but if any one has any conscientious scruples about receiving the disputed books, let him put them on one side, and accept and practice the teaching of those that remain. The apocryphal books were not added to the Old Testament and declared canonical by the Latin Church until the Council of Trent in 1545. They were not written in Hebrew, but in Greek.

## EVOLUTION.

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IN connection with this subject, I may be asked what I mean by "the supernatural" and "the laws of nature ;" but I do not think it worth while to stop to explain, because I am using the language of common people, for whom I write, and who will understand my meaning, however incomprehensible it may be to the philosophers who dwell in the clouds ; but who also may understand me with the aid of an English dictionary, and I suppose they consult this commonplace book sometimes. . Some time ago, one of these gentlemen told me that a dictionary explained the meaning of words, but not their application. In former times children learnt the application of words without the lexicographer or the philosopher ; but we are getting so wonderfully scientific that we shall soon want the philosophers to teach us how to wash our faces. It is, no doubt, upon scientific principles that the young women of the period dress their hair. If so, science is indeed very wonderful, and as far removed from the wisdom of our grandmothers as a travelling circus is from the British Museum.

The manner in which some people speak of evolution reminds me of the Irish boy who, when asked what he believed, replied, "I believe what the Church believes ;" when asked, what the Church believed, replied, "The Church believes what I believe ;" and when asked, what the Church and he believed, surpassed his previous answers with the assertion, "The Church and I believe the same thing." I am contin-

ually meeting with statements to the effect that the writer or speaker approves of Mr. Darwin's theories, believes they cannot be controverted, &c., whilst at the same time he appears either not to know definitely or to be ashamed to state what these theories are. The following statement by Mr. Huxley is of a different character :—" The whole analogy of natural operations furnishes so complete and crushing an argument against the intervention of any but what are termed secondary causes in the production of all the phenomena of the universe, that, in view of the intimate relations between man and the rest of the living world, and between the forces, exerted by the latter and all other forces, I can see no excuse for doubting that all are co-ordinated terms of nature's great progression from the formless to the formed—from the inorganic to the organic—from blind force to conscious intellect and will" (Man's Place in Nature.)

Now, this is something definite and intelligible, as it appears to me this writer's statements generally are. This statement shows us, not only what evolution means, but the grounds on which it rests, namely, " the analogy of natural operations " and " the intimate relations between man and the rest of the living world." The first refers to the gradual development of all animals, including man, from eggs, and plants from seeds ; and the latter to the similarity between the structure of man and other animals. In the previous part of the work the writer enlarges upon, and illustrates, both these points ; and he endeavors to show, at considerable length, how much a man and a baboon are alike ; whilst in his "Origin of Species" he extends this comparison to other animals, such as the horse. The phrase, "furnishes so complete and crushing an argument," is simply Mr. Huxley's way of speaking. It is not he who gives, but he who

receives a blow, that is the best judge of its force ; and it is the same in regard to an argument. To what extent, and in what direction, the argument from an analogy crushes, we shall very soon see. The professor might have spared himself the elaborate comparison which he makes between a man and an ape, for we are perfectly aware that, not only are these animals very similar physiologically, but that there is a wonderful correspondence between the structure of a man and a mouse. But does this prove a common origin? Just as much as the fact that clocks and watches are very much alike in their internal structure proves that they were turned out by the same mould. The maker, by so many separate and independent series of operations, constructs a number of clocks and watches which, whilst varying in size, shape, material, &c., are substantially the same in their internal organization ; and why? Simply because the *object* aimed at is the same in all, namely, the accurate registration of time. So the Creator formed a number of animals, differing in size, form, intelligence, &c., but remarkably alike in their structure, because the object aimed at in each structure was the same—the performance of the functions of life. As to an analogy between natural operations and the development from inorganic matter to organic, and thence to a living being, there is none whatever. The vitalized egg is the production of two animals equal in all respects to that which the egg ultimately becomes, but in the other case Mr. Huxley is supposing a similar progression and result without a similar cause or starting point. What we have in nature is the regular reproduction of the *same* animal, and no progression from a lower to a higher type. In this very work Mr. Huxley admits that the oldest remains of man do not take us appreciably nearer to the monkey tribe ; whilst ancient literary remains and the records of history



serve to show that thousands of years ago there were men equal both intellectually and physically to any who are now living. We, of course, know more to-day than people did a thousand years ago, and Mr. Huxley compares the progress of the human mind since the revival of learning to the development of a butterfly from a caterpillar—a comparison based upon the vulgar error that progress in knowledge necessarily means increase in the powers of the mind. It would be about as sensible to affirm, that because the last African explorer knows so much more about Africa than the first, he must be a much cleverer man. The development of an animal from an egg is exactly analogous to the production of a plant from seed, if you like; but in neither case is there anything analogous to the “progression from the formless to the formed—from the inorganic to the organic.” If these operations prove anything, they prove that that which provides the basis of animal or vegetable life must be equal to the full results of that life; in other words, that you cannot have an effect without an adequate cause. Water will rise to its own level; but according to Mr. Huxley’s theory it ought, by means of a series of descents, to rise higher and higher; so that the ultimate result should be an elevation of a thousand or ten thousand feet, though the starting point was the sea level.

“Crushing” as this difficulty must appear to an unprejudiced mind, the evolutionists make very light of it; but even they are obliged to admit two objections, of no ordinary magnitude, to their theory—objections which for years they have been laboring to remove, but without success. The first of these is the fact—not to go further—that the development of two species from one is at variance with our knowledge of the laws of animal life. Mr. Darwin and Mr. Huxley both wrote works which they published under the high-sounding title of

"The Origin of Species," but all they account for is the origin of varieties. These are traced to "selective breeding," which means breeding exclusively from an animal whose formation is in some respects a departure from other animals of its kind. Mr. Huxley gives some interesting examples of this, and he shows how a six-fingered and six-toed race of men might have been produced; not, however, by "natural selection," but by arbitrary selection, by means of which the greatest number of differences are produced amongst animals which are derived from a common stock, as in the case of the horse, the dog, and the pigeon. Return to natural selection, by allowing these animals to become wild, and the ultimate result would be, not the increase, but the reduction of their differences. But, to return to the difficulty, different varieties, which are known to have been derived from a common stock, are fertile with one another, and their offspring are so; but this is not the case with different species; so that the natural inference is that they were not so derived, but had separate origins.

I will leave Mr. Huxley to state the difficulty in his own words. After expressing the opinion that selective breeding would be sufficient to account for the *structural* differences of animals, he says: "But in addition to their structural distinctions, the species of animals and plants, or at least a great number of them, exhibit physiological characters—what are known as distinct species, structurally, being for the most part either altogether incompetent to breed one with another; or if they breed, the resulting mule, or hybrid, is unable to perpetuate its race with another hybrid of the same kind." And again: "Our acceptance of the Darwinian hypothesis must be provisional so long as one link in the chain of evidence is wanting; and so long as all the animals and plants

certainly produced by selective breeding from a common stock are fertile, and their progeny are fertile with one another, that link will be wanting; for, so long, selective breeding will not be proved to be competent to do all that is required of it to produce natural species."

This, then, is one of the difficulties; and it is remarkable that these gentlemen, after throwing over the Scripture account of the creation because it is at variance with the operation of natural laws, should have found refuge in an hypothesis which is equally opposed to it.

The other difficulty is the fact that we have no means of bridging over the chasm which separates organic from inorganic matter. I again quote Mr. Huxley: "To enable us to say that we know anything about the experimental origination of organization and life, the investigator ought to be able to take inorganic matters, such as carbonic acid, ammonia, water, and salines, in any sort of inorganic combination, and be able to build them up into proteine matter, and that proteine matter ought to begin to live in an organic form. That, nobody has done yet, and I suspect it will be a long time before anybody does do it. But the thing is by no means so impossible as it looks; for the researches of modern chemistry have shown us—I won't say the road to it, but, if I may so say, they have shown the finger-post pointing to the road that may lead to."

This last sentence is sublime. So great a distance are they from the desired goal, that to express it the writer has to use language unheard of before, for which he feels compelled to make half an apology—"if I may so say." The chemists have shown them "the finger-post pointing to the road that *may* lead to it"(!) Mr. Huxley proceeds to show what this finger-post is. It consists in the fact that chemists

have been able from inorganic matter to form compounds which they claim to be exactly similar to various organic substances. But the opinion of other chemists respecting these compounds is by no means flattering, and Dr. Sam. Wainwright says: "A vast array of substances have been compounded or decomposed, but, towards that border-land which separates the organic from the inorganic—if such a border-land there be—this triumphant chemistry has not advanced one single step. 'Chemists,' we are told, 'do not doubt their ability' to do that which has hitherto mocked all their efforts. Thirty-five years ago they were equally untroubled with doubt, and equally destitute of achievement. But who is this 'they?' It is not the chemist; it is the philosopher. The chemist knows better. He knows that, notwithstanding an altered classification of 'organic' and 'inorganic,' yet between his compounds on the one hand and the construction of organizable matter on the other, there still stands the impassable barrier which demonstrates that the affinities of life and living matter belong to a chemistry of which to strive to imitate is to strive in vain." Dr. Elam, quoted by Dr. Wainwright, declares that it would be just as easy to construct a full-grown ostrich as a bit of albumen.

The Rev. Dr. Sears of Staunton, Virginia, in an admirable article on Bible study, makes a little slip when he asks, "Shall we go to those modern scientists who will believe in nothing that they cannot touch with their hands or see through a microscope, and be told that, in all their experiments, they have detected nothing supernatural, 'neither angel nor spirit,' God nor immortality?" As we have seen, these modern scientists *do* believe what they can neither touch with their hands, nor see through a microscope, nor verify by experiment, but what is utterly at variance with the result of their own researches and all our experience.

I now come to a question which is intimately connected with the preceding, and yet distinct from it, I mean the geological theory of the great antiquity of the earth ; which is held by many who are as much opposed to evolution as I am. I have read what scientific men have to say about the heavenly bodies having been thrown off one after another from a mass of hot vapor, travelling through space, and then allowed to cool ; and I have also read of those marvellous achievements of some of our Indian predecessors which Longfellow describes in " Hiawatha," and I attach as much importance to the latter as to the former, not doubting for one moment but that the solidity of the foundation is the same in both cases.

I accept the account of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis in its obvious or literal sense, which is supported by the references to the work of creation in other parts of Scripture, notably in the second commandment : " Six days thou shalt labor and do all thy work . . . . *for* in six days the Lord made heaven and earth." Here, then, we have the certain testimony that the six days of creation were such as men had to work, and which came between two Sabbath days. There are some who take the six days of creation thus, but who, nevertheless, think that what is stated in the first verse of the Scripture narrative may have happened ages before " God said let there be light." But this is merely an accommodation of things to suit the geologists, not what they suppose to be the natural meaning of the passage, and even this is at variance with the statement in Exodus which I have quoted. As to the allegorical or parabolic interpretation, no one supposes it to be other than strained and unnatural—a drastic method of escaping from what appears to be a difficulty. And who is to expound the parable? Are we to accept such interpretations as that given of the garden of

Eden by a popular minister in England a few years ago, according to which the garden was the human body, and the fall of man simply homo's loss of self-control? Or, shall we go back to enquire of Origen, who was as much distinguished for his vagaries as for his learning, and whose allegorizing the narratives of the creation and the fall was the result of an attempt to combine divine revelation and pagan philosophy? Allow that the narrative of the creation and work of the first Adam is merely an allegory, and why should we suppose the incarnation and work of the second Adam to be anything else? But the Bible is not the mystical and unintelligible book these allegorizers would represent. It is, in my judgment, just as easy to distinguish figurative language and parables in Scripture as in any other writings.

But it is maintained that the present condition of the earth gives evidences of changes which, according to the laws now in operation, would have taken a much longer period than that which the literal interpretation of the Mosaic account would allow the earth to have existed. Now this is reasoning from premises of the truth of which we have no certainty. That what you *assume* to have been accomplished by natural forces *was* so brought about is the very thing that has to be proved. You cannot account for the earth's existence at all without supposing the supernatural. Hence the evolutionists, who ignore the supernatural, have not so much as a theory to account for the origin of matter. They do not even profess to have seen "the finger-post pointing to the road that may lead to it." But allow the supernatural, and how is it possible for you to decide where its operations ceased, and at what point or stage natural laws set in? Deny the supernatural, and how can you possibly believe the Bible to be other than a mass of fiction from beginning to end? What natural law will



account for the central fact of the Bible and the very foundation of Christianity—the incarnation of Jesus Christ—a man being born of a Virgin? If we are but the creatures of natural laws, “let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die,” and there can be no resurrection from the dead. The evolutionists are to a certain extent consistent, as they ignore the supernatural throughout, but there can be no consistency in holding to such doctrines as the incarnation and the resurrection, and yet objecting to the literal interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis because it cannot be true except by assuming the supernatural. You may say, “here are coal beds the formation of which must have occupied a hundred thousand years, if formed by processes such as are now going on; and they are just like those which have been so formed.” But would not the same argument be equally valid against the Scripture account of the incarnation? In Jesus Christ people saw a real man whom they could not distinguish from ordinary men, and would it not have been perfectly safe and certain on scientific grounds to maintain that he must have had a human father as well as a human mother? In short, in order to prove that the literal account of the creation cannot be true, you have first to prove that there is no God—or, if there is, that he has not power to arrest, reverse, and operate independently of natural laws—or that, if He has the power, he has never exercised it.

To conclude—ever since the completion of the volume of Inspiration and the establishment of Christianity, the devices of the enemy have been much more largely employed in attempting to corrupt than to destroy the Bible on the one hand and Christianity on the other. And what the enemy is laboring at with all his might in the present day is, not so much to prove that the Bible has no divine authority, as to

throw doubt and uncertainty upon everything that is of vital importance in connection with it ; so that people may be left to suppose they are perfectly free to choose a religion for themselves, or to ignore all the claims of religion and wander hither and thither at their own sweet will. In one place, Scripture itself gives us a charter to do as we please, but with one important condition attached : " Rejoice O young man in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth ; and walk in the ways of thy heart. and in the sight of thine eyes : but know thou that for all these things God shall bring thee into judgment."

